

loins, to be the best, if not the only, conservators of the new France; that he conceived of a purely French empire which should be the depository for that land of all that had been gained by the Revolution; and that he believed he could overcome the inertia of the tremendous speed with which he had entered upon his career of single rule. But it is not probable; for no one knew the French better, appreciating as he did their patriotism and their passion for leadership among nations. It was because the Bourbons had failed to represent these qualities that reconstructed France despised the Bourbons; it was because the new France saw their incarnation in Bonaparte that it had assisted him to climb. He must have known very well that, having mounted so high, he would be compelled to mount still higher.

He also understood the dynastic exclusiveness of Europe. In a sense the houses of Hanover, of Hohen-zollern, and of Savoy were parvenus in the councils of royalty; yet they were ancient princely stocks, and their accession to supreme power had not shocked popular feeling; the dubious and blood-stained title of the Czar did not diminish his influence, for his succession was not more irregular than that of many of his predecessors on the semi-oriental Russian throne. But to substitute for the Bourbons, the oldest divine-right dynasty of Europe, and in the enlightened West, a citizen king of low descent, who based his claims on popular suffrage, was to hurl defiance at a system than which to millions of minds none other was conceivable. To reach the goal fighting was not a voluntary choice, but an absolute necessity; for the French must be left in no doubt but that their popular sovereign was quite as able to assert his peerage among kings as any one of royal lineage and ecclesiastical unction would be.

These were the conditions under which the bark of